



SEYMOUR ALTERNATIVE FARMING EXPO

14 – 16 February 2020 | seymourexpo.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

20 January 2020

Tree change inspired the Seymour Alternative Farming Expo ambassador

The 2020 Seymour Alternative Farming Expo ambassador is a former marketing specialist who made the leap to become a first generation sheep farmer.

With a passion for quality and sustainability, Toni Barton purchased an 81ha property at Nulla Vale, east of Lancefield.

Starting with just 40 Australian White lambs in 2012, she began building the farm from the ground up.

“The tree change came for the desire to grow my own food,” Toni said.

New to the farming game, Toni wasn’t afraid to think outside of the box.

Taking advantage of the breed’s reputation as the ‘Wagyu of lamb meat’, in 2016 and with a flock of 250, the entrepreneur launched lamb bacon.

“Innovation and value adding in agriculture is critical to our sustainable future; we have many mouths to feed and I want to show others that it is achievable off small acreage,” she said.

“I really hadn’t considered I’d be feeding thousands of families each month with my fresh lamb and lamb smallgoods. It’s an honour to be entrusted as the source of lamb proteins for so many.”

Toni said launching Australia’s first-ever lamb smallgoods enterprise was more than she ever bargained for.

But from the get-go she knew it was fundamentally important to manage the gut flora and health of the flock.

“I committed early on that we would never grain-feed our stock, even if it meant we needed to make sacrifices with volume of output.

“The biggest challenge was to find the courage to stay small and sustainable and to say no to particular customers.

“I made the decision to provide food direct to the customer, to my 1000 families, so I have declined to work with many chefs, wholesalers and export contracts and stay small.”

With grace and grit, Toni learned everything from boning out lambs and packaging to smallgoods manufacturing.



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She has paved the way in sales and distribution for The Original Lamb Bacon Co.

“The lamb smallgoods, on the other hand, the biggest challenge has been growing from boutique brand to a global brand,” Toni said.

“It’s taken a lot longer than I had anticipated. There is no road map for exporters to follow.”

Toni will share her knowledge during a number of talks at the Small Farms Learning Hub during the Seymour Alternative Farming Expo held at Kings Park in Seymour from Friday, February 14 to Sunday, February 16.

For further information or to buy tickets online and save 15% off the gate price, visit:

www.seymourexpo.com.au

To stay up to date, find Seymour Alternative Farming Expo on Facebook and Instagram

[View and download event imagery](#)

Media Contact

Emma Bridgland

Marketing & Administration Co-ordinator | MMG Events

media@seymourexpo.com.au

Mobile: 0417 490 783 | Office: 5820 3161

7940 Goulburn Valley Hwy, Kialla, Vic, 3630

PO Box 204, Shepparton, Vic, 3632